A Thankſgiving

SERMON

For the Deliverance of Our

KING

From the Late Intended

ASSASSINATION.

Preached *April* the 16th. 1696.

A Thanksgiving

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OF

His Sacred Perſon:

And of the Kingdom from the *French* Invaſion.

Preached by *Francis Gregory*, D. D. Rector of *Hambleden* in the County of *Bucks*.

LONDON:
Printed for *R. Sare*, at *Grays-Inn-Gate* in *Holbourn*, 1696.

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OF

His Sacred Person:

And of the Kingdom from the French Invasion.

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Psal. 18. 50.

Great Deliverance giveth he to his King, and sheweth Mercy to David *his anointed*, &c.

GOD Almighty, having rejected *Saul* from being King, was pleas'd to choose and name *David* to be his Successor. And in order to it, was *David*, by God's Command, privately anointed, whilst King *Saul* was yet alive. And that *David* might be the more firmly setled upon his Throne, God gave him a very great Interest in the Hearts and Affections of all his Subjects. The Text tells us, 1 *Sam.* 18. 16. *All* Israel *and* Judah *loved* David. And the Reason why they did so, is given us, *Vers.* 14. David *behaved himself wisely in all his Ways, and the Lord was with him.* God had blest him with wonderful Success in fighting their Battles, he had lately crown'd him

with a glorious Victory over that monſtr ous Giant, who had ſo often ſcorned, and ſo proudly defied the whole Army of *Iſrael.* Upon this mighty Conqueſt the Generality of the People were ſo tranſported with Joy, that even the Women came out, and met them with Inſtruments of Muſick, dancing and ſinging: Saul *hath ſlain his Thouſands, and* David *his ten Thouſands.*

This Acclamation, aſcribing a great deal more of Honour to *David*, than to *Saul* himſelf, diſpleaſed *Saul* to that high Degree, that the Text ſaith, Saul *eyed* David *from that Day and forward.* He grew ſo jealous, and was ſo very much afraid of him, that, leſt *David* ſhould diſpoſſeſs him of his Royal Throne, he took many Ways to deſtroy him.

But what Injury had *David* ever done to *Saul?* We read, that he had often and much obliged him; he had ſucceſsfully fought his Battles; he had charmed and turned out the Devil, with whom *Saul* was poſſeſſed; he had ſpared *Saul*'s Life, when he was at his Mercy; he only cut off the *Skirt* of *Saul*'s Garment, when he might as eaſily have cut his *Throat*; but notwithſtanding theſe great Obligations, *Saul* ſtill feared,

envied, and purſued *David*; but *David*, through the kind Providence of God, ſtill eſcaped the Hand of *Saul*.

Now, in Memory of his manifold Preſervations, *David* did pen this Pſalm. Its Title, which runs thus, tells us ſo. *To the chief Muſician, a Pſalm of* David, *the Servant of the Lord, who ſpake unto the Lord the Words of this Song in the Day that the Lord delivered him from the Hand of all his Enemies, and from the Hand of* Saul. In the grateful Remembrance of God's many ſignal Favours to him, and particularly for his protecting Providences, doth *David*, like a Man in an Extaſie of Joy, begin the Pſalm thus, *I will love thee, O Lord, &c.* And very good Reaſon had he ſo to do; for in the next Verſe his own Acknowledgment is this. *The Lord is my Rock, and my Fortreſs, and my Deliverer; my God, my Strength in whom I will truſt; my Buckler, and the Horn of my Salvation, and my high Tower.* By all which *metaphorical* Expreſſions *David* means only this; namely, that it was the Hand of God, which had preſerved him in all his Dangers. And as he *begins* this Pſalm with theſe grateful Acknowledgments; ſo doth he *end* it too, in the Words of my Text. *Great Deliverance giveth he to his*

King, and sheweth Mercy to David *his anointed.*

Concerning this Deliverance mentioned in the Text, Four things may be considered: First, Its Author; *He gives*; and again, *He sheweth Mercy. He*, i. e. *God.* Secondly, The *Person* concerned in this Deliverance; and that is *David*, which is here stiled, *His King*; and again, *his anointed*; i. e. *God's King, and God's Anointed.* Thirdly, The *Motive*, which inclined God to work this Deliverance for *David*; and that was his own *free Grace* and Favour: For, saith the Text, He *gives* Deliverance; and again, He sheweth *Mercy*: By giving Deliverance he doth so. Fourthly, The *Nature* and Quality of this Deliverance; the Text stiles it, *Great Deliverance.*

First, The first thing considerable in the Text is the *Author* of this Deliverance, and that is God. *He gives Deliverance*, and by so doing, *He sheweth Mercy*, and to him doth *David* again and again most justly ascribe it, *Psal.* 18. 48. *He delivers me from mine Enemies.* It is not my own *Policy*, it is not my own *Courage*, it is not my own *Conduct*, it is not my own *Army* that de-

delivers me; 'tis none but God; that God, whose Wisdom is Infinite, and whose Power is irresistible; who knoweth the most secret Plots, who can easily confound the most cunning Devices, and break in Pieces the greatest Strength of wicked Men.

Now, This God was *David*'s Friend: So he tells us, *Psal.* 118. 6. *The Lord is on my Side*; and again, *Vers.* 7. *The Lord taketh Part with them, that help me.* It is true, *David* had some Assistances from Men; *Jonathan* discovered to him *Saul*'s Designs to kill him; his Friend *Hushai* was employed to countermine the dangerous Counsel of *Achitophel*, and he did so; *Joab*, the General of *David*'s Army, was employed to fight his Battels, and with Success he did it: All these did contribute something towards the Deliverances of *David*; but notwithstanding this, *Jonathan*, *Hushai*, *Joab*, and all *David*'s Assistants, were but so many living *Tools* and *Instruments* in the Hand of God, and acted by the Influence and Guidance of his Providence.

And for this Reason, when *David* reflects upon his manifold Preservations, he overlooks all *second Causes* and Humane Helps, and attributes them all to *God*; so he doth, *Psalm* 62. 2. *God only*

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is my Rock and my Salvation: And ſo in my Text, *He giveth Deliverance to his King*: And again, *He ſheweth Mercy to* David *his Anointed.*

And may not our *Engliſh David* ſay as much? May not *our King* as juſtly ſay, as even *David* did, *God only is my Rock and my Salvation?* For when wicked Men had entred into a Combination to murder his ſacred Perſon; when the Plot was laid and ripe for Execution; when the Time and Place were appointed; when ſuch and ſuch bloody Villains had undertook this barbarous, inhumane, and deviliſh Work, I mean, by Piſtols or Blunderbuſſes to ſhed our Sovereign's Blood, and end his Life; when this curſed Crew had mutually engaged themſelves by Oath to keep this Helliſh Deſign ſecret, pray, *who revealed* this hidden Plot, and ſo prevented its Execution?

We cannot think that this Helliſh Plot was diſcovered by any immediate Revelation from Heaven; but by one of thoſe bloody Butchers, who had been privy and conſenting to it. But how came ſuch a Miſcreant to reveal it? 'Tis poſſible that the *Fear* of his own Life, ſhould the Plot be otherwiſe detected, and ſo miſcarry, might

might ſomewhat move him; or perhaps the *Hopes*, not only of *Pardon*, but of a conſiderable *Reward*, might much incline him: But, above all, it is moſt probable, that ſuch a Man's own *Conſcience*, being awakened by God, whoſe Vicegerent it is, might ſo confound and terrifie him at the Proſpect, and with the Guilt of ſo great a Crime, that he could find no Reſt in his Boſome, till he had both diſclaimed and revealed it.

But whether it were *Fear* or *Hope*, or *Conſcience* which prevailed with this Man to make this Diſcovery, we muſt conclude that *God* Almighty, by his wiſe and over-ruling Providence, raiſed and uſed him, as his *Inſtrument*, to do this happy Piece of Service. For, without the Divine Influence, neither *Fears*, nor *Hopes*, nor *Conſcience*, can move the Heart of a Wicked Man to renounce his Sin, and do ſuch a bleſſed Act, as this Man did by this Diſcovery. It was indeed this Man's great Sin to engage himſelf in ſuch a deteſtable Conſpiracy, and to involve himſelf in ſo deep a Guilt; but ſince he had unhappily done ſo, he could never have took a better Courſe to expiate his Crime in ſome Degree, than by confeſſing, lamenting, and diſcovering it; and for his ſo doing

ing he hath Reaſon to bleſs that God, who inclined him to it, as well as we.

But the Diſcovery of this ſecret Plot is not the only Evidence, that God is the undoubted Author of our Deliverance: For when the *French* Troops were gathered together with a Deſign to invade us, when their *Fleet* was ready, when their *Men*, *Horſes*, and *Arms* were imbarqued, put to Sea, and thought to ſurprize us, *Who* drove their Ships back to their own Coaſts, ſave only that *great God*, whoſe Command the *Winds* and the *Seas* obey? Nay more; when, before this Plot was known, a conſiderable Number of our own Ships were ſailing to the *Streights*, a Place very far from *England*; that God, who knew the *French* Deſign, was pleaſed, by turning the Wind, to ſend our Ships home again; that in ſuch a dangerous Juncture of Time we might not want and be without them. So that confeſs we muſt, that it is God, who gives great Deliverances: And if ſo, how are we obliged this Day to bleſs him for it?

Secondly, The Second thing conſiderable in this Deliverance is the *Perſon* therein concerned; and that is *David*; here ſtiled *his King*, and *his Anoint-*

Anointed. First, *God's King*, and, *God's Anointed*: And indeed *David* was so in an extraordinary Way, and peculiar to those Times, wherein God was pleased now and then, once particularly, to name his own Vice-gerents.

Of this Number *David* was one; God's King by *Nomination*; and God's anointed by his own immediate and *special Command*.

But in these Days of ours, there is no such King to be found in all the World; none *named* from *Heaven*, none anointed or *crowned* by *God*'s own immediate Institution. And yet since God Almighty tells us, *Prov.* 8. 15. *By me Kings reign*, and since St. *Paul* saith, *Rom.* 13. 1. *There is no Power but of God*; We may conclude, that our present King is *His King*, and *His Anointed*: Though not as *David* was, by *Nomination*, yet by the secret *Direction* and Guidance of his over-ruling Providence.

For, pray tell me, *who* was it that inclined the Prince of *Orange*, with the Hazard of his Life and Fortunes, to venture into *England*, to secure us from *Popery*, which then threatned our *Religion*; and that arbitrary and despotical Government, which then threatned our *Laws* and *Liberties*?

berties? And when this *Prince* was come over, *who* inclined ſeveral *Regiments*, that were ſent out againſt him, to run into his Aſſiſtance? And when this was done, *who* moved our *Nobility* and *Gentry* to place this Prince upon that *Throne*, which the late King had *deſerted*, and left vacant and quite empty? And ſince the King hath been ſo crowned, *who* is he, that hath *generally* inclined the Hearts of Subjects to own him for their *Sovereign* Lord, and pray for him, as ſuch? If it be God, that hath done all this, methinks we may conclude from ſuch a *Concurrence* of Divine *Providences*, that our *preſent* King, who is highly concerned in the Deliverance of this Day, is owned by Almighty God, to be, according to the Expreſſion in my Text, *His King* and *His Anointed*.

And if ſo, 'tis not our Buſineſs to *diſpute* his *Title*, but to *acquieſce* under his Government, to ſubmit to his Laws, to furniſh him with neceſſary Supplies, to pray for his Life, Health, and Proſperity, and to obey his juſt Commands.

True it is, the Deliverance of this Day doth plainly ſhew, that *ſome* Men are of another Mind; but were it put to the general Vote of this

this Nation, whether the *late King* ſhould be reſtored, or the *preſent King* be continued; if we ſet aſide the *Roman Catholicks* and the debauched *Ruffians* of this Age; I am perſwaded, that of twenty Religious and ſober *Proteſtants*, nineteen would vote for *King William*.

And by the way, I am apt to think, that this late Attempt to Murder our preſent King, hath given him a *greater* Share in the Affections of his loyal Subjects; and thereby ſettled him the more *firmly* upon his Throne; even as a *Tree*, which, being *ſhook* now and then by the Wind, is thought to root the *deeper*, and conſequently to *ſtand* the *faſter*. But,

Thirdly, The third thing conſiderable in the Text, is the *Motive*, which inclined God Almighty to work this Deliverance for *David*; and that is intimated in thoſe two Expreſſions, He *gives Deliverance*; and again, He *ſheweth Mercy*, which imports, that *David*'s Deliverance did not ariſe from any *Worth* or Merit of his *own* upon Terms of *Juſtice*; but barely from the *free Grace* and Kindneſs of God.

And if it were ſo with *David*, it cannot be otherwiſe with us: *David* was One, who loved

his God, and took Pleasure in his Service; but as for us of this Nation, there is amongst us such a general Corruption of *Manners*, so many gross Errours and Heresies about Matters of *Faith*, so much Carelessness and Irreverence, such Schisms and Factions about Matters of *Worship*; nay, such down-right *Atheism* and *Irreligion*, that we deserved a final *Destruction* rather than a *Deliverance*.

That sober Man, who considers the reigning Vices of this Age, the Swearing, the Drunkenness, the Whoredom, and other Debaucheries of *England*, whereby the Laws of God are miserably transgressed, and the Majesty of Heaven basely affronted, must needs confess, as the Prophet did, *Lam.* 3. 22. *It is of the Lord's Mercies that we are not consumed*, that we are not yet given up as a Prey to cruel and blood-thirsty Men. We must needs say, as *David* here doth, *God gives Deliverance*: And He doth it, because *He sheweth Mercy*.

Fourthly, The fourth and last thing considerable in this Deliverance is its *Nature* and Quality; the Text stiles it, *great Deliverance*: And certainly such is *Ours*; great in four Respects.

First,

First, Our Deliverance is *Great* in Respect of our *Enemies* from whom we are delivered.

Secondly, Our Deliverance is *great* in respect of the Persons, who are delivered.

Thirdly, Our Deliverance is *great* in respect of that *dreadful Danger*, which did attend us, and was so near us.

Fourthly, Our Deliverance is *great* in respect of its vast *Extent* and Latitude; for it reacheth far both as to *Time* and *Place*.

First, Our *Deliverance* is *great* in respect of our *Enemies*, from whom we are delivered; I mean the *French King* and his Myrmidons, his Priests and Jesuits, his Troopers and Dragoons, those his late *Reformers* of Religion, who have not one strong Argument against the *Doctrin of our Church*, save only that which hangs by their *Sides*. I mean their *Swords* and *Pistols*. It is well known, that the *French* King is a Potent Monarch; his Dominion is large, his Kingdom

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is rich, his People are numerous, his Army great, his Fleet conſiderable; and though he may have *loſt* the *Affections* of his Subjects, yet ſtill hath he an *abſolute Command* over their *Perſons* and *Purſes*.

But all this Greatneſs cannot ſatisfie this proud and ambitious King: His Deſign is to make himſelf the *ſole Emperour* of the *Weſt*; and becauſe our *preſent King*, by his extraordinary Courage and Conduct, ſtands moſt in the *French* King's Way; ſince his *Armies* had not the Luck to kill him fairly in the Field, the Report is, that the *French King* himſelf *contrived* the Way, and *encouraged* bloody Villains to *ſurprize* our King at unawares, and murder him in a Moment.

'Tis ſomewhat ſtrange that ſo much as *one Thought* of ſuch a vile and treacherous Act ſhould have entred into a *Crowned Head*; but it is much more ſtrange that it ſhould find ſuch *Entertainment* and Welcome there: 'Tis for the Honour of Kings and Princes, even when they deal with Enemies, to be generous and noble; but for a King, and ſuch an one, as ſtiles himſelf,

ſelf, the *moſt Chriſtian King*, and ſtands ſo much upon his Honour; for him to ſit down, conſult and contrive a Deſign, and earneſtly wait for its *Execution*; a Deſign to murder a Neighbouring Prince ſneakingly, and in cool Blood; it is an Act ſo *baſe*, ſo *ignoble*, that, had there been nothing of *Sin* in it, yet there is ſo much of *Shame*, that I cannot call it by any Name, that is bad enough.

And had this horrid Plot took that Effect, which was deſigned by its Contrivers; had the *French Army* ſuddenly *ſurprized* and *overcome* us, with what Severity would the *French* King have treated the *Proteſtants* of *England*, ſince he lately was ſo exceeding cruel to the *Proteſtants* of *France*, who were his own *natural* and *loyal* Subjects?

In ſhort, this is the King, who, to enlarge his own Dominion, hath unjuſtly invaded the Territories of other Princes; ſurprized and burnt their Towns, plundered their Villages, deſtroyed their Country, and drencht his Sword, and made it *drunk* with the innocent *Blood*, perhaps of *Millions*.

This

This is the devouring *Lion*, from whose merciless *Claws* we are yet delivered; an Enemy, that is powerful; an Enemy, that is *implacable*; an Enemy, whose tender *Mercies* are but *cruel*: And certainly a Deliverance from such an Enemy must needs be a great one.

Secondly, Our Deliverance is great in respect of the Persons, who are thereby delivered. For these Persons are great, either, first, in Point of *Quality*; or, secondly, in Point of *Number*.

First, Some Persons concerned in this Deliverance are great in Point of *Quality*. Our *Bishops* and many other grave Divines are Persons somewhat considerable in the *Church* of *England*, in regard of their *sacred Employment*; our Gentlemen, Knights, Lords, Earls, Dukes, are Persons very considerable in the State of *England*, in regard of their great *Estates* and *Titles* of Honour; our Judges, in regard of their Office, are great Men too; but, above all, our King is very great indeed; and that, first, in respect of his high Birth and Extraction, as being born of *Royal Blood*;

Blood; and ſecondly, in Reſpect of his *high Station*, as being *God's Vicegerent*.

Now, it is certain that if the late Conſpiracy had ſucceeded, all theſe *great* Men would have very ſorely ſmarted by it; but eſpecially our King, who was the firſt Man deſigned for Slaughter, and conſequently the firſt and the moſt concerned in this Deliverance.

Secondly, Beſides our King, and the other great Men of our Nation, the main *Body* of our common People are alſo concerned in this Deliverance: And what they want in *Weight*, they do certainly make up in *Number*.

And their Number is ſo very conſiderable, that it doth much advance our Deliverance, and make it very great indeed: I remember, *Joſeph* told his Brethren thus, *Gen.* 45. 7. *God ſent me before you to ſave your Lives by a great Deliverance.* If the Deliverance of *one ſingle Family* deſerved to be called, a *great Deliverance*, how much the Deliverance of ſo many thouſand Families as are in *England*?

Thirdly, Our Deliverance is great in respect of the Danger, which did attend us, and that was very dreadful, and very near to us too.

We were in Danger of a *French Invasion*, a *French Religion*, and a *French Government*: A Religion, which is Idolatrous; a Government, which is Tyrannical; by the one we must have lost our Consciences, or our Lives; and by the other we must have lost our Laws, Estates, and Liberties: So that I may say, we were in Danger to lose whatever is and ought to be dear to us.

And as this Danger was very great, so was it very near us too: For, the *French* Fleet and Army were ready abroad, and the *Traytors* at home were prepared to kill the King, the Day appointed for the Murder was come, the Design was every way ripe, and there wanted nothing, but a fit Opportunity for its Execution.

Now, in this critical Juncture of Time, there appeared for us, as the Greeks speak

Θεὸς

Θεὸς ἀπὸ Μηχανῆς, the unexpected Providence of God ſtept in and interpoſed betwixt us and Ruin; diſcovered the Conſpiracy, and ſo prevented its Execution. So that we may ſay, as *David* did in a like Caſe, *Pſalm* 124. 7. *The Snare is broken, and we are eſcaped.* God was pleaſed to ſnatch us, as ſo many Brands deſigned for the Fire; as it were out of the Smoke, juſt before the Flame ſhould have been kindled to conſume us. And may we not, upon this Ground alſo, very juſtly ſtile our Deliverance, as the Text doth that of *David*, *a great Deliverance?*

Fourthly, Our Deliverance is great in reſpect of its Extent and Latitude; for it reacheth very far both as to Time and Place.

We muſt not think that we of this preſent Age, and this particular Nation, are the only Perſons concerned in it; the Benefit of it is like to redound to other Kingdoms and other Ages.

Firſt, To other Kingdoms; for, had the *French* King invaded and conquered *England*, as

he designed; he would easily have over-run the Territories of the Allies and Confederate Princes, who are not able, by their own Strength, to withstand the Power of *France*.

Secondly, To other Ages; for, had this cursed Plot took that Effect, which was designed by its Contrivers, we cannot doubt, but our conquering Enemies, had they proved such, would have derived and transmitted both Popery and Slavery, two detestable Names, quite down to our Posterity.

Now then, if other Ages, if other Nations and Churches, but especially those of the Reformed Religion, be concerned, as doubtless they are, in this Deliverance, as well as we; then certainly the more extensive this Deliverance is, 'tis so much the greater.

And now what remains, but that we render great Thanks for our great Deliverance to that great God who is the undoubted Author of it: Since God hath done his Part in Point of Mercy, let us now do ours in Point of Gratitude. Nor is it enough for us to bless our God with our Tongues

Tongues for one ſingle Day, but let us glorifie him in our Lives, as *David* did, even whilſt we have a Being.

The Benefit of this Deliverance is like to redound to our Poſterity; and why ſhould not our preſent and grateful Senſe of ſuch a Mercy be conveyed down to After Ages? Certainly a Deliverance of this Nature deſerves a Solemn Day of Thankſgiving Year by Year: For, it is ſaid, that this late Conſpiracy was laid as deep, and might have proved as fatal, even as the very *Gun-powder Treaſon* it ſelf: And if ſo, ſince we obſerve the Fifth of *November* in Memory of that, why ſhould we not as well obſerve the Fifteenth of *February* in Memorial of this?

But, in the mean time, let us take heed that we do no more provoke the God of our Deliverance by our repeated Crimes; let us remember, that *France* is like to be *France*, and *Rome* is like to be *Rome*, I mean, our implacable Enemies ſtill: And if *Old England* will be *Old England* ſtill, if we ſtill reſolve to continue as profane and vicious as ever; what may we expect

peſt at laſt, but utter Ruin and Deſolation? To this Purpoſe tends that Addreſs, which *Ezra* made to God in a like Caſe, and upon a like ſuppoſition, *Ezra* 9. 13, 14. *ſince thou our God haſt given us ſuch a Deliverance as this, ſhould we again break thy Commandments, wouldeſt not thou be angry with us, till thou hadſt conſumed us, ſo that there ſhould be no remnant nor eſcaping?* But that we may keep God our Friend, and ſo need not fear the Power or the Plots of our Enemies, Let us take that advice, which our Lord gave to that impotent perſon, whom he had miraculouſly cured, *John* 5. 14. *Behold, thou art made whole.* What then? *Sin no more.* So ſay I: *Behold,* we are this Day *Delivered,* and that by little leſs than a *Miracle*; well, and what if we be? *Sin no more.* There is *danger* in it; for, as the Text intimates, God hath yet in ſtore χεῖρόν τι *ſome worſe things, which may yet befall us, even* a ſmall *Exciſion* and Deſtruction of our *Perſons, Church,* and *Nation.*

But that our ſelves, our Families, and our Kingdom may flouriſh, let us by our religious, holy and vertuous Lives engage our God to be

ſtill

ſtill our great Protector; and, in order to our common Safety, let us cloſe our Thankſgivings with that ſolemn Petition, which our Liturgy puts into our Mouths. *O Lord ſave the King*; And let every good Man, who loves our Church and Nation, ſubſcribe or ſay, *Amen.*

F I N I S.